

STOP THE PRESSES! HERE'S SOME SCOOPS AND SCUTTLEBUTT TO KNOCK YOU OUTTA YOUR TEEPEE!

ITEM! Merciful Marvel has seven twinnin' **SPECIALS** on sale right now — The far-out **FANTASTIC FOUR**, featuring a certain brain-blasting blessed event — The Amazing **SPIDER-MAN**, presenting the startling secret of Peter's mom and dad — The incredible **HULK**, fighting in the land of the Inhumans — the ever-lovin' **SGT. FURY** and his Howlers, contributing their block-bustin' bit to the Battle of the Bulge — The mighty **AVENGERS**, meeting and fighting the Original Avengers — the mad, mod **MILLIE THE MODEL**, bringing you a bevy of bedlam, beauty, and batty belly-laughs — and for a totally unexpected, titanic treat, the majestic **TALES OF ASGARD**, possibly the most beautiful presentation issue of all time. There! We did our part! The rest is up to you!

ITEM! Notice anything different this ish? There are more letters than ever on our letters pages — 'cause we've been omitting the usual answers. It's a real "first" for Marvel, and we decided to do it because we thought you yourselves might enjoy answering each other (as well as giving us more time to spend on the yarns themselves). So, from now on, when a frantic one brings up an objection, criticism, or query, we'll wait till some other frenzied fans retaliate, and award our usual ubiquitous No-Prizes for the best "get-the-poor-old-Bullpen-off-the-hook" answers. Besides, you'll get lots more letters per page this way. So, let us know how you like our agonizin' new approach, okay?

ITEM! Let's see what's doing in the budding Bullpen these days! Rascally **ROY THOMAS** is knockin' 'em dead with his new Nehru threads and guru goatee! Groovy **GARY FRIEDRICH** will be sending us his scripts from Hollywood for the next few months! Jazz! **JOHNNY BOKITA** bought himself a new set of wheels, and now you can't even get him to walk across the street! Jolly **JACK KIRBY** won three "Best Artist" awards from different fan groups in just one week! Dashing **DONNIE NECK** made his first visit to the Bullpen in months, and didn't recognize **SMILIN' STAN** in his nutty new beard! Juicy **JIMMY STERANKO** not only writes and draws his strips — but he colors 'em, too! (Watch out, Artie and Sam — if he ever finds a lettering pen —!) Every time we wanna make **Mary MARIE SEVERIN** happy, we promise that her brother, **Long-John SEVERIN** will soon be inkin' one of her ginchy yarns! (And, he will — soon as he gets the time!) We don't know how **Darlin' DICK AYERS** can do so many war stories without getting battle fatigue. He doesn't get a vacation — he takes a furlough! Gosh... we're running out of room! More next ish!

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

Marvel's Mags on Sale Right Now!

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #2: Stop the presses! Here's the biggest news of the year! In answer to a zillion desperate demands, our sensational new 35-center is now printed in full, glorious color! And it stars the vile villainy of the Green Goblin! Don't just sit there, citizen!

THE WORST FROM NOT BRAND ECHN #10: The fouled-up Fantastical Four, Spidey-Man vs. Gnat-Man, and all the other sickening sagas that won't stay dead, in one single, intolerable issue!

SILVER SURFER #2: Marvel's newest and most darily dramatic superhero returns to thrill you again as he battles the startling occupants of a fearsome flying saucer.

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Remember last ish, when we told you we'd shy away from editorializing? Well, no sponer did we go to press than a flood of new letters arrived, concerning the great "Soapbox controversy," and the vast majority went like this:

Dear Stan: In your recent Soapbox column, you asked if Marvelom Assembled wanted you to editorialize more. I vote "yes." What has separated Marvel from other mags is that you have a definite profound philosophy to express; and the way you express it is beautiful. Marvelism is fast becoming a philosophical movement. A prime example of this can be found in the Silver Surfer, one of the most moralistic characters ever created. Marvel Comics are the voice of a new breed of intellectual. Therefore, editorializing is virtually a necessity.

Achille D, DiBacco
1701 Terrace Dr. West
Lake Worth, Florida

So, that sinks it! From now on, whenever we have something to get off our collective chest, we'll assume we have a magniloquent mandate to sock it to ya, and let the chips fall where they may.

Excelsior!
Smiley.

Next ish: "What is a bigot?"

FANTASTIC FOUR #30: Who says this isn't the age of Marvel surprises? Just when you thought we'd forgotten about him — Wyatt Wingfoot returns — and how!

FANTASTIC FOUR SPECIAL #6: It's almost too much! Our heroes are trapped in another world, while Sue finally gives birth to — WOW!

SPIDER-MAN #66: And, speaking of WOW-type goodies, how about trying this one on for size —? None other than the murderous Mysterio — more mystifying than ever!

SPIDER-MAN SPECIAL #5: Here's where Spidey learns the truth about his long-gone parents — in the most off-beat Special of the year!

AVENGERS #57: Hero — or killer? Human — or monster? Those are the questions the Avengers must answer about the sinister Vision... if he doesn't destroy them first!

AVENGERS SPECIAL #2: Our answer to an avalanche of requests! The new Avengers battle to the death with the original Avengers... in a world they never made!

X-MEN #48: Our marvelous misfits are back together again... but can their combined might stand against an army of mutants led by the malevolent Mesmero?

DAREDEVIL #45: When we give a hero his lumps, we don't kid around! This time we've got poor DD in a trap with no escape! It'll really rock ya!

MIGHTY THOR #157: This is the one we've been leading up to! If Mangog draws the Odinsword, it means the end of the world! And — he's drawing it! Hang on, heroes!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #107: One of the strangest of all Cap's thrillers! Will our hero be destroyed by madness... or will Dr. Faustus get him first? Quien Sabe?

INCREDIBLE HULK #109: Zowie! Story by Stan Lee! Layouts by Frank Giacoletti! Guest-starring a fighting-mad Ka-Zar, if Green Skin was great before, he's endyville now!

HULK SPECIAL #1: To celebrate his first sizzlin' special, who could possibly battle our jolly juggernaut to a standstill? How about the phantasmagoric — Inhumans?

IRON MAN #7: It's a battle to the finish with the malevolent Maggia, and the odds are on our golden Avenger's side, until... enter the Gladiator! 'Nuff said!

SUB-MARINER #7: Wouldja believe... Destiny for President! At long last, Namor faces the one foe he hates most of all — in one of our most startling climaxes!

CAPTAIN MARVEL #7: Mar-Vell thinks he's seen everything our ever-lovin' planet can throw at him — and then he meets the living, loathing entity — Quasimodo!

MARVEL SUPERHEROES #17: You requested it — and now you've got it! The sensational Black Knight, in a new kind of story — with a new kind of far-out foe! And oh, that artwork!

DR. STRANGE #174: You've never heard of the nefarious Nekron before, but take it from us — after this you'll never forget him! The most mystic battle of all!

SGT. FURY #59: We call this one "D-Day for Dum Dum", as our mustachioed warhorse faces a life-and-death challenge... with the Howlers unable to help him!

CAPTAIN SAVAGE #7: If we have to tell you any more than that the rocking Raiders risk all to rescue a Marine as named Ben Grimm — but, we kinda figure we don't!

TALES OF ASGARD #1: Just to show that nobody can take mixed-up Marvel for granted, here's a giant-sized Thor-Asgard surprise Special, recreating the greatness and glory of the Thunder God's early days!

MARVEL COLLECTORS' ITEM CLASSICS #17: The FF., Iron Man, and Doc Strange — all in one incredible ish that will leave you begging for more! Further proof that Marvel had a better idea first!

MARVEL TALES #17: A titanic trio of twice-told tales, starring the mighty Thor, the Human Torch, and the one and only Spidey! A block-bustin' bargain ish, if ever we saw one!



DON'T YIELD, WRITE S.H.I.E.L.D.

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., N.Y., N.Y. 10022

Dear Stan and Jim,

I'm not gonna elaborate on how great your comic 'AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D.' is 'cause we both know it's really boss and a half and you probably get your fill from other letters every day anyway. Rather, I'd like to ask you something. I've been with Nick Fury from the start—I saw his first Life Model Decoy created; I saw him fight his first enemy, Hydra; I was there when he fought Mantillo and the Fixer; I watched him beat the Druids; I read on as he defied THEM and AIM; I deeply perused his battle against Hydra reborn; I learned what caused the New York blackout of '65; I sweated through his fight with the Yellow Claw; I've pondered over Jim's short one-liner stories he's been writing and 'drawing as of late. I've got my own torn undershirt, and I've got Nick Fury pictures plastered all over the place in my room. Now I ask you, doesn't that deserve some sort of No-Prize for loyalty or somethin'? Normally I wouldn't bug ya for such a thing, but I'm quite worn out and quite broke. So please consider my case. A No-Prize gets you acceptance into society, it's your passport into swank upper-class places, it's your freedom from guilt and misery, it's your release from life's burdens, it's your temporary escape from reality, it's your proof that you're a Keeper of the Comic, it's expensive yet cheap, it's everything yet nothing, it's valuable yet worthless, it's no and yes. I won't be able to go on much longer without one, so I'm asking you from the bottom of my heart and wallet for the No-Prize for Loyalty. The defense rests. Thanks a lot for hearing me out, as long as S.H.I.E.L.D. (or for that matter any Marvel comic) stands, so too will I be ever faithful and loyal to the cause. Step on, Marvel, but watch out—that first one can be a lulul MAKE MINE THE BEST! MAKE IT MARVEL!

Greg Janicke, 5623 W. 64th Place
Chicago, Illinois 60638

Dear Stan and Jim,

I couldn't even take the time to get up and get my Marvel stationery! After reading NICK FURY #3, I grabbed the first paper in sight and wrote the following. Jim Steranko is the greatest innovator, experimenter, and all around artist psychedelia of the decade! Nay, of the past thirty years! And he writes his own stories, too! Wow! If Jim does no other book for Marvel but S.H.I.E.L.D. in his career, I'll be more than satisfied. "Completely Original?" Words can't begin to describe his work which speaks quite well for itself. He took a befuddled spy strip and turned it into one of the greatest action series of all time. It has outlived its fathers, Bond and The Man from U.N.C.L.E. Just look at NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. His modest autograph is not needed.

"Steranko strikes again" is written all over it. Each ish he surpasses himself. "Who is Scorpio?" was great, "Today Earth Died" greater, and now "Dark Moon Rise, Hell Hound Kill." With Steranko at the helm you can't even give a thought to "Another Baskerville Hound imitation". It just can't be done. From the totally terrifying center spread to the most infinitesimal panel on page 20, everything dripped with ultimate, bone-chilling suspense! Jim Steranko is comic-dom's newest genius.

Bob Dewon, 31 Liberty St.
Everett, Mass. 02149

Dear Stan and Jim:

Felicitations, fearless friends of Ferbusht! A few questions: Is the M.A.M.S. playing Trilby to splendidous Stan's Svan-gall? Have the myopic minions of Marvel been mesmerized by lycanthropic Lee's lacerdamain? Has no one seen fit to comment on symmetrical Steranko's sterling spoof in the now defunct STRANGE TALES? I am honestly amazed! I should have thought that S.H.I.E.L.D. would have been inundated by mail raving about Fury's fanciful farce. I refer to the story entitled "When Comes . . . Black Noon!" in issue #164. On page 3, Fury has materialized in the barber shop. In panel 5, Slim has rushed to close the door and bar a prospective customer from entering, saying, "Whoops! Sorry, Mister, we're closed! The boss just gave us the day off!" The gentleman answers, "Take it easy, chum! You act like I'm an enemy spy!" An enemy spy, indeed! James Bond (woulda believe Sean Connery?) stands there in the doorway uttering those witty words, and not one of Marvel's Mole Men comments on Jounty Jim's japey. Shame! Well, I've gotta run now. The sun is setting. Absit invidia.

Joseph Kurnova, 175 Mahar Ave.
Clifton, New Jersey 07011

Dear Stan and Jim:

As usual the latest Nick Fury story was great! The cover was one of Marvel's best. The ghostly effect on pages two and three and the swamp scene in the centerfold were magnificent! By the way, I wonder how many people noticed all that Mycroft had in common with a certain Mister Holmes? Mycroft was the name of Sherlock's brother and there was a strong resemblance between your character and the late great Sir Basil Rathbone who played Holmes back in the '30's and '40's, as Honest Ivy Wot's-his-name says, "Don't yield, back U.N.C.L.E.???" 'Nuff said.

Frad Miller, 132 Park Street
Middletown, Ohio 45042

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (REAL FRANTIC ONE)—A BUYER OF AT LEAST 3 MARVEL MAGS A MONTH.

T.T.B. (TITANIC TRUE BELIEVER)—A DIVINELY-INSPIRED 'NO-PRIZE' WINNER.

Q.N.S. (QUOTE 'NUFF SAYER)—A FORTUNATE FRANTIC ONE WHO'S HAD A LETTER PRINTED.

K.O.F. (KEEPER OF THE FLAME)—ONE WHO RECRUITS A NEWCOMER TO MARVEL'S ROLLICKIN' RANKS.

P.M.M. (PERMANENT MARVELITE MAXIMUS)—ANYONE POSSESSING ALL FOUR OF THE OTHER TITLES.

F.F.F. (FEARLESS FRONT FACER)—AN HONORARY TITLE BESTOWED FOR DEVOTION TO MARVEL ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY.

Dear Stan and Jim,

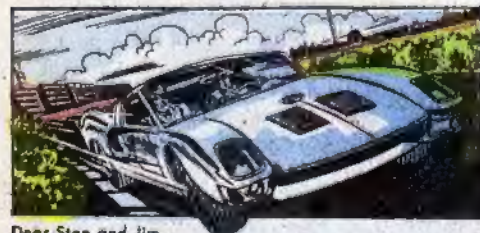
I would like to lodge a protest against the way the SHIELD comics seem to be moving. Take for instance your latest mag, #3. In favor of it I can say that the lettering by Sam Rosen was excellent (with his old English style and all that); however, aside from the lettering I can't for the life of me see what use it could possibly be. I would say that it was just the ridiculous illustrations, but that could be explained by the fact that it was a rotten story and not worth properly illustrating. It must be noted, however, that Jim Steranko both wrote and illustrated! It just goes to show what we happen when you let one person do something by himself. Then again, maybe he has just lost his touch! To try and correct the situation, these way-out weird "tales" which seem to belong more in Grand Echh, I strongly recommend returning to the basic premise for SHIELD, and let's see some action and situations which are at least somewhat believable. Considering all aspects, I consider it the biggest waste I have ever made. I'll wait until next month, though, and buy one more, then I'll decide whether you will lose 12¢ per month or not.

Wayne Kaiser, 11704 Rosemont Ave., N.E.
Albuquerque, N.M. 87112

Dear Stan and Jim,

S.H.I.E.L.D. #3 strikes me as an excellent example of nontypical Marvel script and art. The story can stand for itself with no need of reading previous stories, (it is not a S.H.I.E.L.D. story). It did not matter that Nick Fury was the hero. With a different speech pattern it could have been Sam Spade, The Saint or some new character. The plot flowed along with few captions and none of the footnotes (the unnecessary ones) that I'm getting pretty tired of. I enjoyed the way the action was linked to the plot but not dragged out as it is in some stories. As far as the art, I don't see how it could be improved on. The coloring, or in some places the lack of it, did much to create the great mood of the story. Although the unbordered run-together panels (per pg. 4) are sometimes a little hard to follow, they are a welcome departure from most comics. I always enjoy Jim's use of Ben-Day, Single Tone-Double Tone and other aids. This issue was no exception. I hope to see many more of these off-trail stories in the future.

Robert Kennedy, 2020 Brentwood Blvd.
Brentwood, Missouri 63144



Dear Stan and Jim,

STOP!! Halt! What are you doing?? What do you think you're doing?? Long ago in a beautiful halcyon day, STRANGE TALES began featuring Nick Fury of SHIELD. At this time all Marveldom cheered as they saw our favorite cigar chomper rise to new heights of glory. Enemies came and went; Hydra, AIM, The Druids, and each one was a feather in your cap; and then, one sad day something happened! Fury was gone, at least our Fury! In his place was an over-equipped, science-spoutin' excuse for a poor man's Flash Gordon, mixed with a grade B-minus version of James

Bond. Instead of our hero in SHIELD uniform fighting thugs with his trusty Tommy gun, we have some escapee from a funny farm wearin' a set of ink-colored lang johns, wired up like a pinball machine, an' swingin' the latest ultra-green iso-wave-length neuro-negative-beam blaster. What you've done to our hero is bad enough; what you've done to our mag is unforgivable! First of all, what has happened to our famous fightin' four?? Don't act innocent, you know who I mean: Fury, Gabe, Dum Dum, and Sitwell?? When these guys ruled the roost, we had a great mag! Look who's replaced them. Look what we've got now!! When two of our heroes vanished and the remaining two degenerated into mere shadows of their real selves it was sad. When we got a load of their "replacements" it was heartbreaking. Instead of our fun favorites we found ourselves stuck with three of the most unnecessary and detracting spotlight-stealers Marvel ever had the misfortune to run across. First of all the Gaff-comment: yeechhh! What did ya' guys do, steal him from Grand Echh or fleecchhh? This third-rate agent Q fits with Fury end his gong like an Edsel, or wouldja believe a Model T? Second! Agent (urk!) Quartermain, comment: (censored). Of all the nauseating spotlight hogs in fiction, where did you dig this grinning gargoyle up?? On second thought, don't answer that, just put him back wherever it was and we'll just forget all about it, okay?? Okay! Now, the Countessa Valentina de Fountain. Don't get me wrong, I like girls, but does she have to take up so much story space?? She's a knockout I'll admit (ya-ya-voom) but she is more suited to the role of occasional support member than full-time star. Aside from looking pretty, her actual contributions to the plots are usually few. Let's see a bit less of her, okay? I'll make her appearances that much better. (Besides, as far as Fury went, I always preferred Pamela Hawley. Gone but never forgotten.) The second charge to be brought against you is mutilation of plot and artwork. This is a direct attack on SHIELD! Although the damage actually goes back to the preceding story, the most graphic example of this heinous assault on story plot begins with SHIELD #1 "Who is Scorpio?" In this ill-fated first-work, the true story occupies only about half the book. This was in itself bad enough but I'll get to that in a second. The second crime perpetrated upon this book was the inclusion of a third-rate grade-C tear-jerker which bore a relationship of only 0.15% to the actual story plot (I measured). As though this wasn't enough, you made both of the bum-hero-villains in this "favorite for sob-sisten" look too much like Sitwell. Getting to the story, details were so cluttered, one could find little real point to it. The only really redeeming feature of the whole mag was seeing Scorpio's hover-plane crash and burn. As for the artwork, I speak for many Marvel fans in saying that we're finding this continual "op-art" and psychedelic slop a little nauseating. It used to be that we could see real action! Now yeechhh! When Marvel first got started, the pictures were too small and underdetailed, now they're too big and over-detailed! Recently then, the deteriorating quality of stories of SHIELD has been all too evident. So, if you are so hard pressed for ideas, why don't you at least go back and revive some old ones?? The Druids would be great for a starter. In closing I leave you with a comment and a couple of questions. First, issue #2 was a bit of an improvement over SHIELD #1; however, it did seem like the picture on page 17 was just a little bit of a plagiarism on King Kong. As for Dr. Black (or Centurion) he was quite a character and I'm wondering about our chances of seeing him again? In many ways he was much like the High Evolutionary; it would be something if we could see their revival and those two pussycats teamed up (or squared off). Oh well, from a fan (I think), so long and Hail Hydra!

Fred Lee Cain, 1024 N. Penn Ave.
Independence, Kansas

NEXT FURY vs SHIELD!

...IT LEAVES YOU HERE ON THIS DOOMED PLANET WITH THE REST OF YOUR FELLOW MEN! WHILE WE, IN HERE MINUTES BY YOUR RECKONING, SHALL SOAR SPACEWARD IN...

THIS!

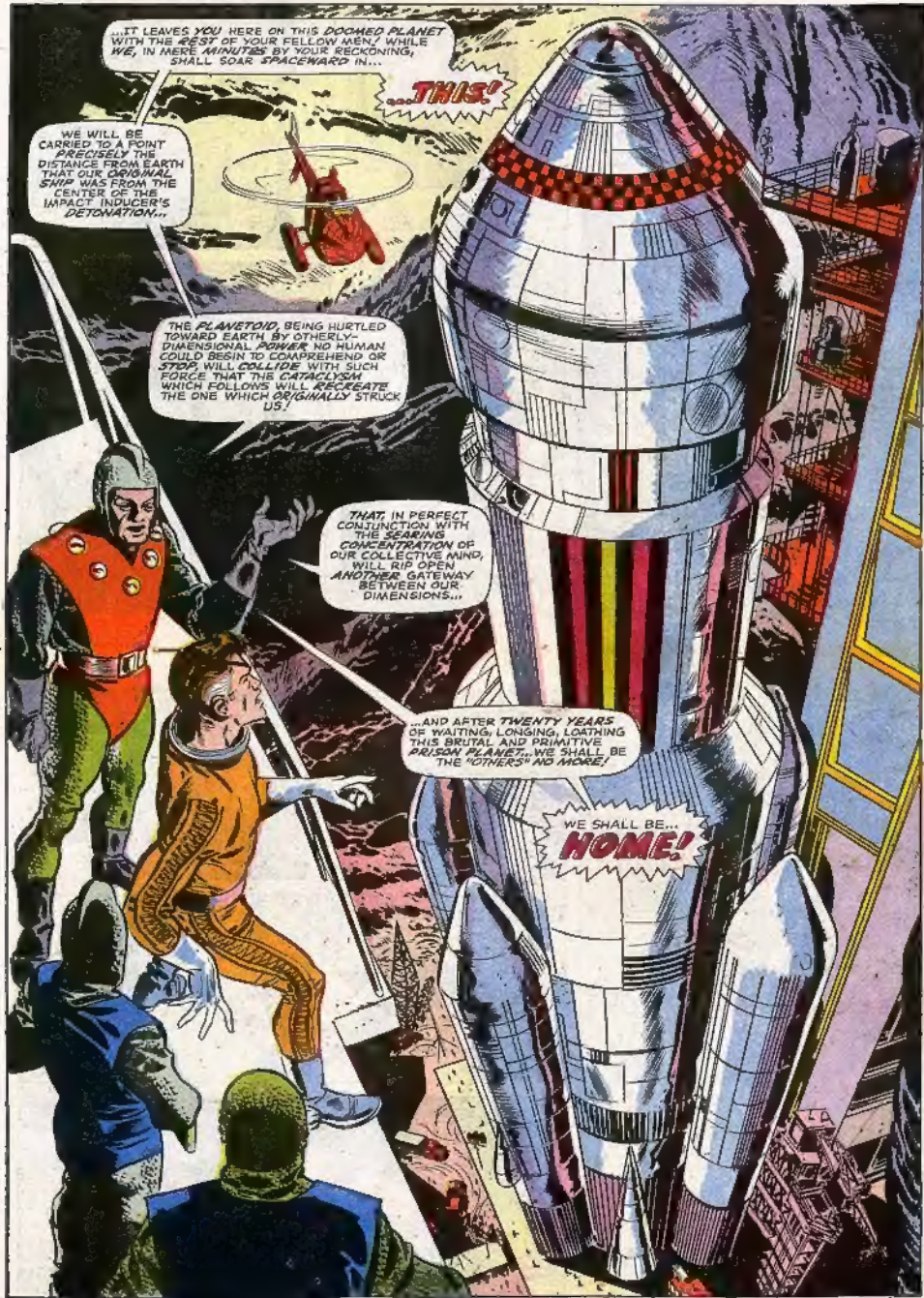
WE WILL BE CARRIED TO A POINT PRECISELY THE DISTANCE FROM EARTH THAT OUR ORIGINAL SHIP WAS FROM THE CENTER OF THE IMPACT. INDUCER'S DETONATION...

THE PLANETOID, BEING HURTLING TOWARD EARTH BY OTHERLY-DIMENSIONAL POWER NO HUMAN COULD BEGIN TO COMPREHEND OR STOP WILL COLLIDE WITH SUCH FORCE THAT THE CATAclysm WHICH FOLLOWS WILL RECREATE THE ONE WHICH ORIGINALLY STRUCK US!

THAT IN PERFECT CONJUNCTION WITH THE SEARING CONCENTRATION OF OUR COLLECTIVE MIND, WILL RIP OPEN ANOTHER GATEWAY BETWEEN OUR DIMENSIONS...

...AND AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF WAITING, LONGING, LOATHING THIS BRITISH AND PRIMITIVE PRISON PLANET... WE SHALL BE THE "OTHERS" NO MORE!

WE SHALL BE...
HOME!



...IT LEAVES YOU HERE ON THIS DOOMED PLANET WITH THE REST OF YOUR FELLOW MEN, WHILE WE, IN MERE MINUTES BY YOUR RECKONING, SHALL SOAR SPACEWARD IN...

...THIS!

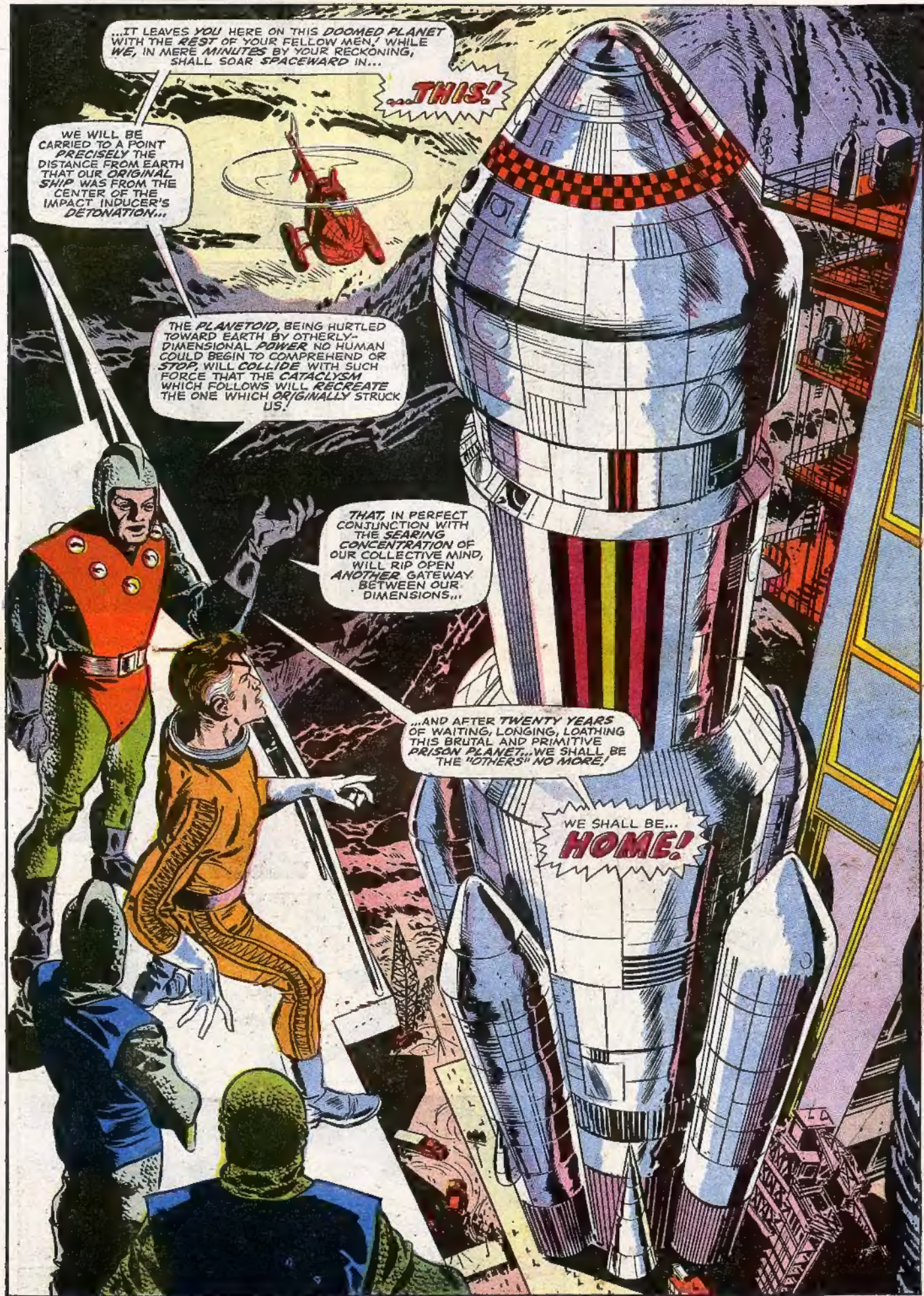
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MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

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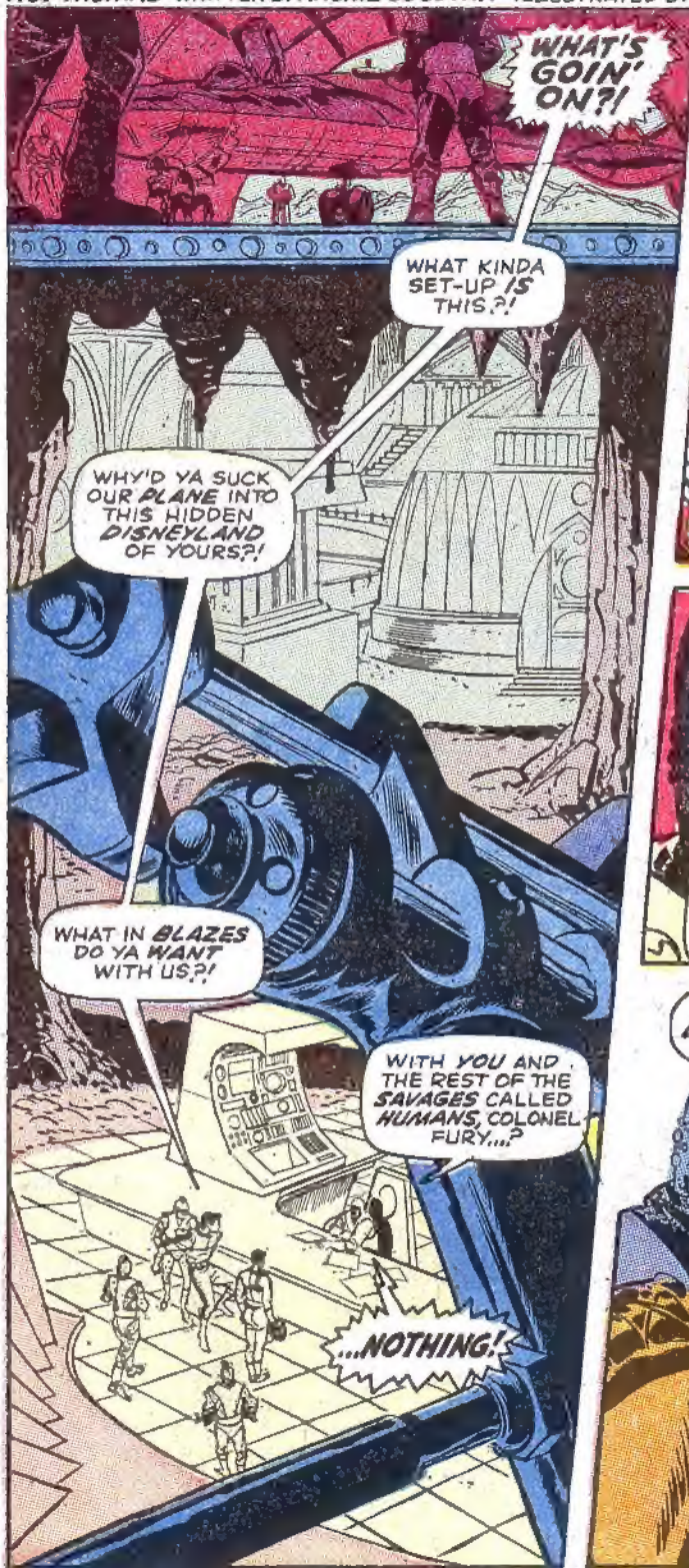
NICK FURY AGENT OF... SHIELD.

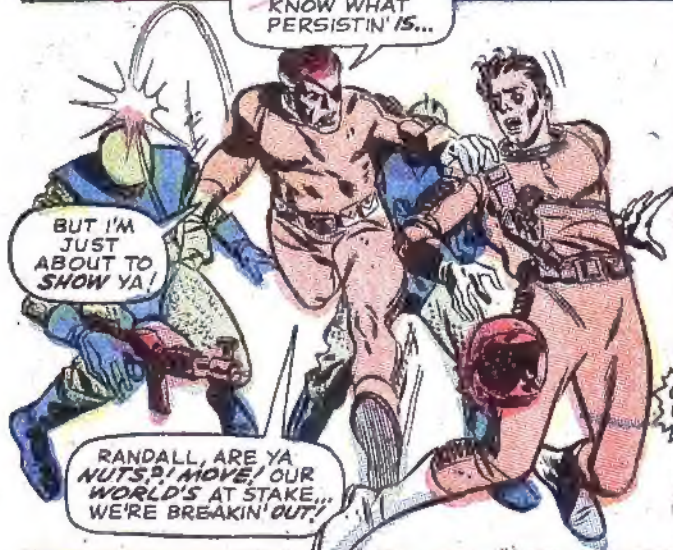
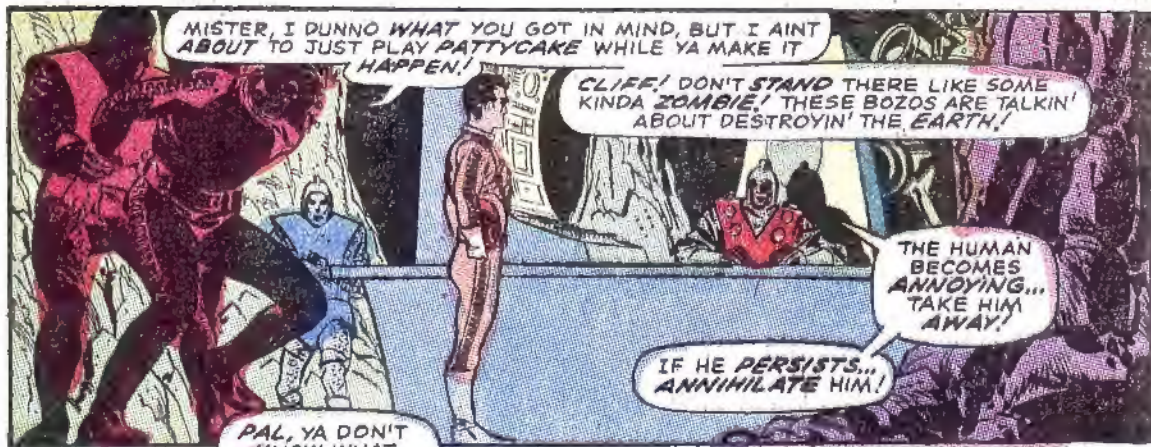
APPROVED
BY THE
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AUTHORITY

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STERANKO







VA CAN TELL ME ABOUT IT
ONCE THIS HUNK'A ROMAN
CANDLE'S DOWN!

277

N-NO...! IT'S
NOTHING...REALLY
NOTHING!

A ROUTINE TEST FLIGHT, ONE MAN'S TROUBLED DREAM...HURL NICK FURY TOWARD THE FEARFUL
MOMENT WHEN...

"DOOM MUST FALL!"

THIS'LL BE A LONG LAYOVER!
COULD BE A LITTLE SACKTIME
IS JUST WHAT WE BOTH NEED!

H-HUH...WHAT?
ER...OH, SURE...
YOU'RE PROBABLY
RIGHT!

FOR A DREAM
THAT WAS NOTHING!
IT SURE SEEMS TO
HAVE LEFT RANDALL
SPOOKED!

I DON'T GET IT...
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN
SHIELD'S TOP
FLYBOY...COOL
AS ICE...

...S'FUNNY!

I DECIDED TO
CO-JOCKEY THIS
TEST RUN TO KEEP
MY MIND OFF WORRYIN'
OVER VAL AND THE
TROUBLE SHE'S IN...

SO FIRST THING,
I START SWEATIN'
ABOUT CLIFF
RANDALL INSTEAD!

ONCE A SERGEANT,
ALWAYS A MOTHER
HEN!

WHILE, IN THE QUARTERS OF THE SHIELD PILOT...

GOT TO GET HOLD
OF MYSELF...GOT
TO FORGET THAT--

GOOD LORD!

MY
REFLEC-
TION...!

IT...IT'S ME, AND
YET...IT'S LIKE
ONE OF THOSE
DREAM CREATURES...

ONE OF THE...
THE...OTHERS!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

AND THE DREAM-HAUNTED CLIFF RANDALL IS NOT ALONE IN BEING JOLTED FROM RELAXATION...

COLONEL FURY!
PRIORITY
ALERT!

THE PRESIDENT AND
THE U.N. SECURITY
COUNCIL ARE BEING
NOTIFIED!

REPORT IMMEDIATELY
TO THE OBSERVATRON
CHAMBER! THIS IS A
FULL SCALE
EMERGENCY...

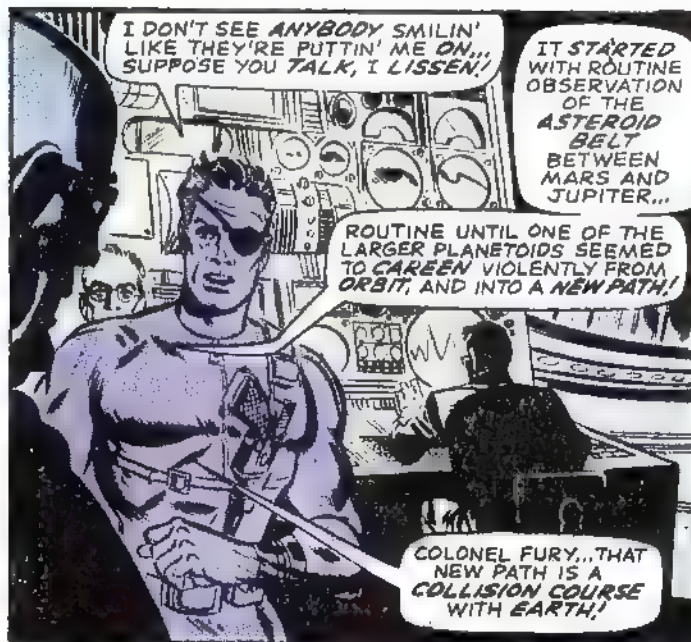
...CONDITION
RED!

WITH THE ECHOING
CLANGOR OF STEEL DOORS
BEHIND HIM, THE SHIELD
RAMROD BURSTS INTO
THE CAVERNOUS CHAMBER
HOUSING THE OPTICALLY-
SOPHISTICATED AND POWERFUL
TELESCOPIC-PROBE...
THE OBSERVATRON!

AWRIGHT!
WHAT'S THE
PROBLEM?!

THE SQUAWK BOX MADE
IT SOUND LIKE THE
BIGGEST THING SINCE
HENNY-PENNY THOUGHT
THE SKY WAS FALLIN'!

SIR...THAT'S A
LOT CLOSER
TO THE TRUTH
THAN ANY OF
US CARE TO
THINK!



I DON'T SEE ANYBODY SMILIN' LIKE THEY'RE PUTTIN' ME ON... SUPPOSE YOU TALK, I LISSEN.

IT STARTED WITH ROUTINE OBSERVATION OF THE ASTEROID BELT BETWEEN MARS AND JUPITER...

ROUTINE UNTIL ONE OF THE LARGER PLANETOIDS SEEMED TO CAREEN VIOLENTLY FROM ORBIT, AND INTO A NEW PATH!

COLONEL FURY... THAT NEW PATH IS A COLLISION COURSE WITH EARTH!



AN' IF IT HITS... WHAT KINDA DAMAGE?

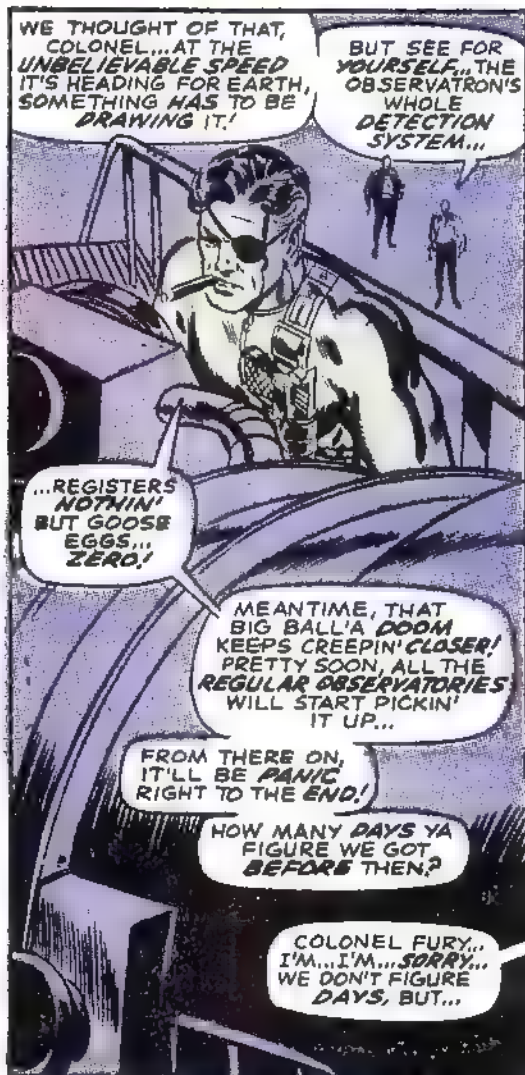
NOT IF, SIR... WHEN! DAMAGE MAY BE THE WRONG WORD ALSO... I'D USE DESTRUCTION...

...TOTAL!

IT... JUST DON'T SEEM POSSIBLE...

BY ALL NATURAL LAWS, AS WE KNOW THEM, IT ISN'T!

THEN, THAT LEAVES UNNATURAL!



WE THOUGHT OF THAT, COLONEL... AT THE UNBELIEVABLE SPEED IT'S HEADING FOR EARTH, SOMETHING HAS TO BE DRAWING IT!

BUT SEE FOR YOURSELF... THE OBSERVATRON'S WHOLE DETECTION SYSTEM...

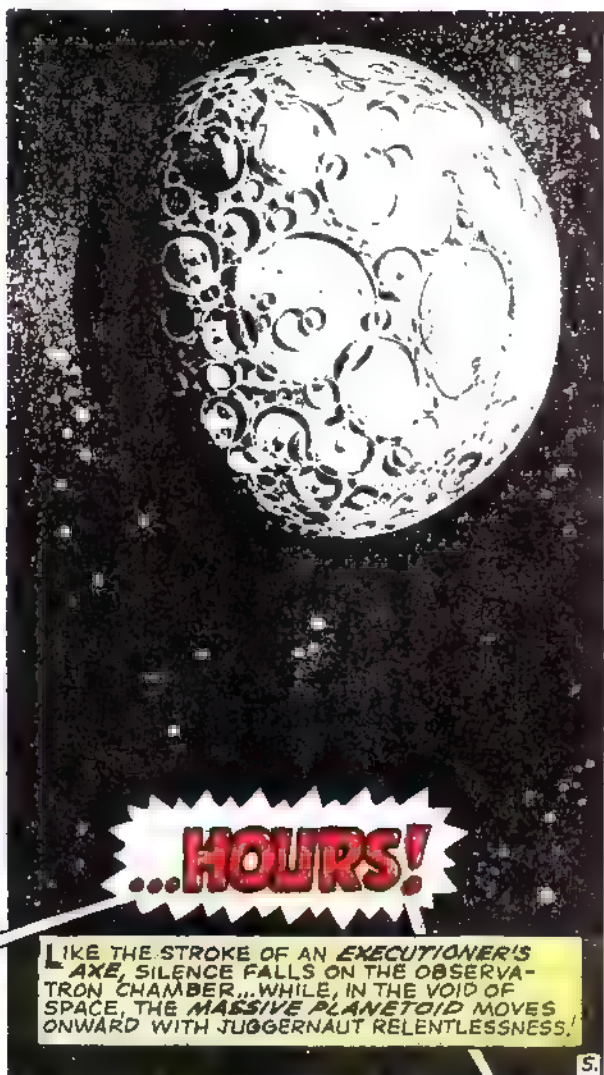
...REGISTERS NOTHIN' BUT GOOSE EGGS... ZERO!

MEANTIME, THAT BIG BALL'A DOOM KEEPS CREEPIN' CLOSER! PRETTY SOON, ALL THE REGULAR OBSERVATORIES WILL START PICKIN' IT UP...

FROM THERE ON, IT'LL BE PANIC RIGHT TO THE END!

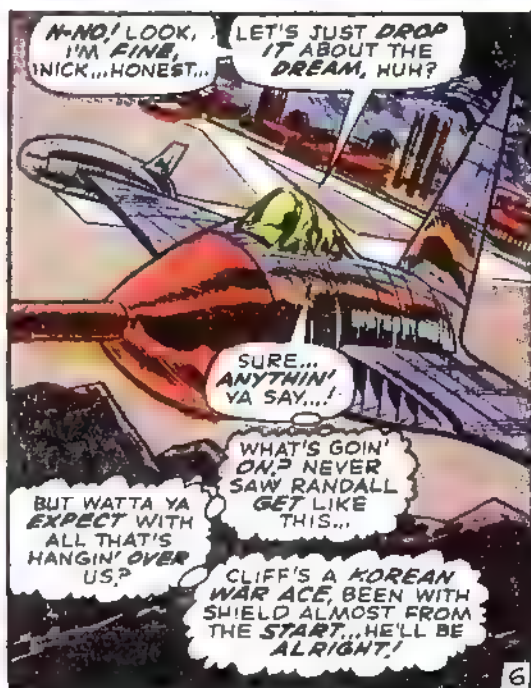
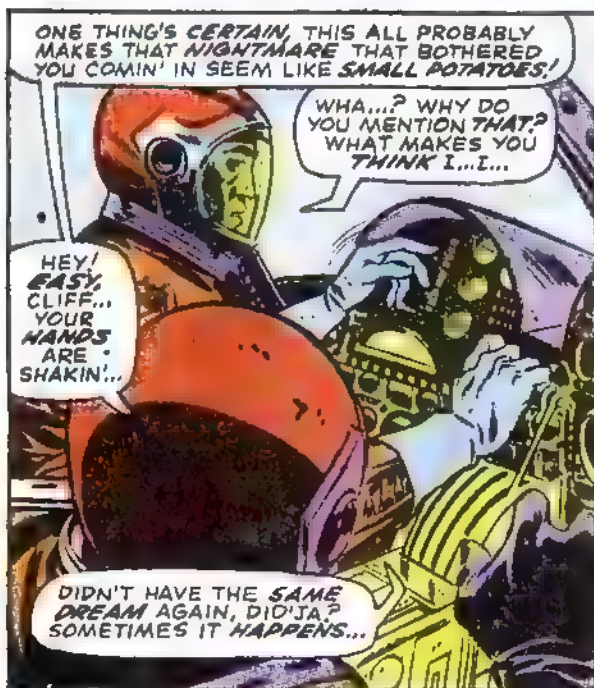
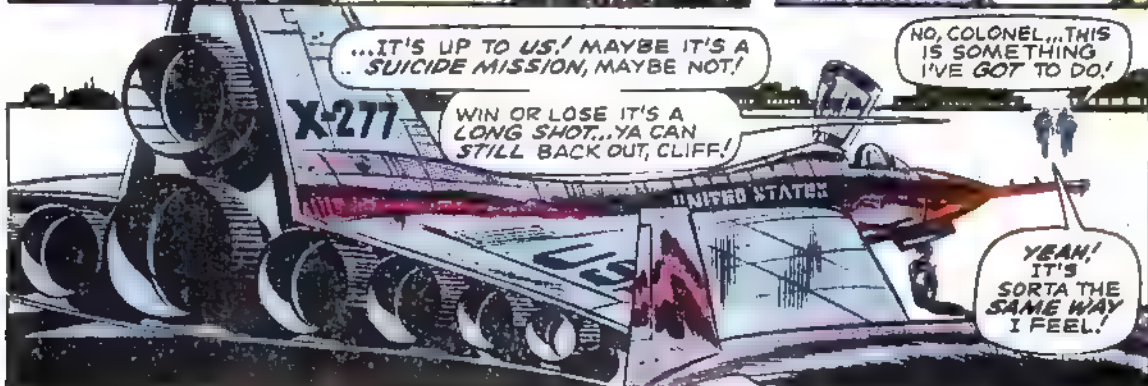
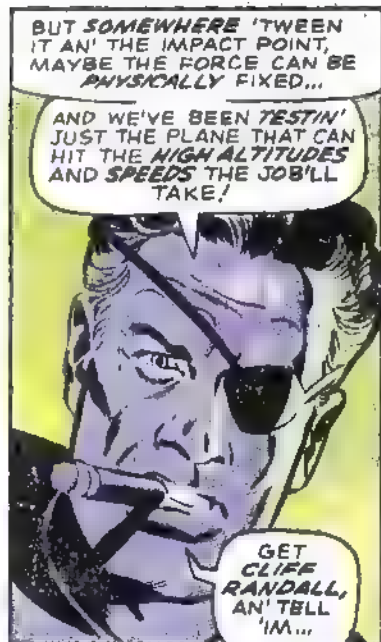
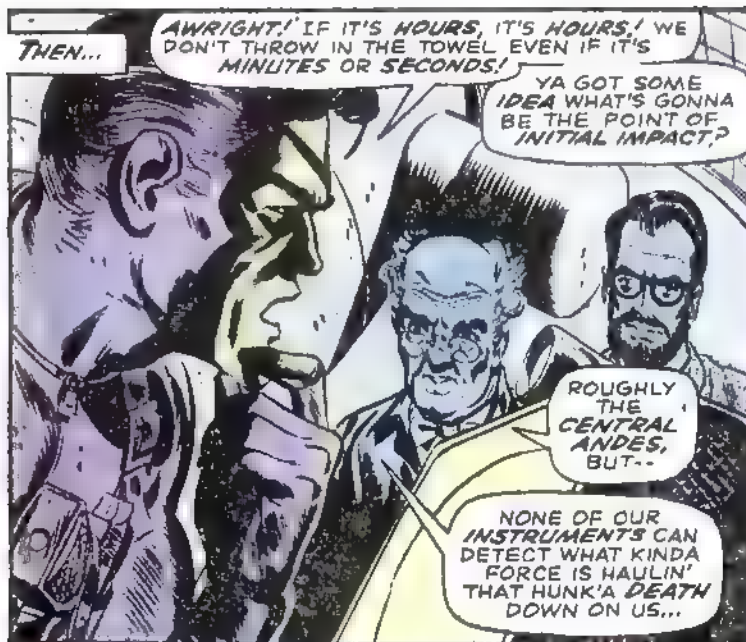
HOW MANY DAYS YA FIGURE WE GOT BEFORE THEN?

COLONEL FURY... I'M... I'M... SORRY... WE DON'T FIGURE DAYS, BUT...



...HOURS!

LIKE THE STROKE OF AN EXECUTIONER'S AXE, SILENCE FALLS ON THE OBSERVATRON CHAMBER... WHILE, IN THE VOID OF SPACE, THE MASSIVE PLANETOID MOVES ONWARD WITH JUGGERNAUT RELENTLESSNESS!



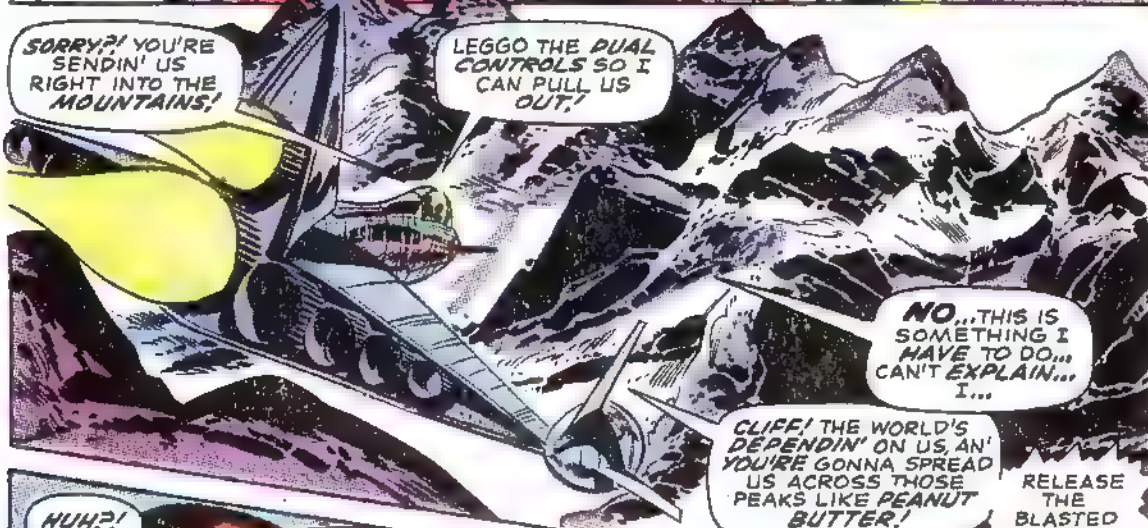
BUT, AS THE ROCKET-POWERED CRUISER SOARS TOWARDS ITS DESTINATION AT ULTRA-SONIC SPEEDS...



CLIFF, HAVE
YA GONE
BATTY?!

THIS IS
NO TIME
FOR FIDDLIN'
WITH THE
AUTO-
CONTROL
SETTIN'!

N-NICK...
I'M
SORRY...



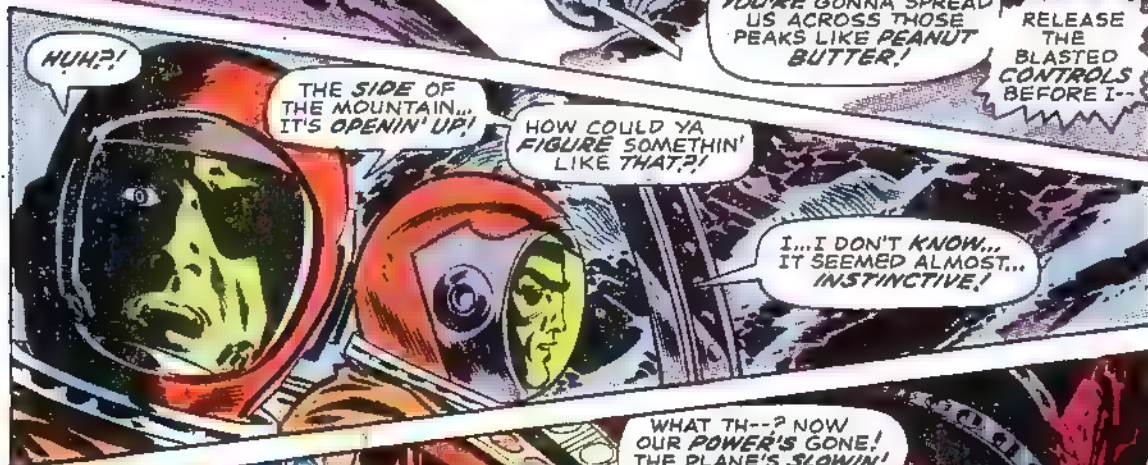
SORRY?! YOU'RE
SENDIN' US
RIGHT INTO THE
MOUNTAINS!

LEGGO THE DUAL
CONTROLS SO I
CAN PULL US
OUT!

NO...THIS IS
SOMETHING I
HAVE TO DO...
CAN'T EXPLAIN...
I...

CLIFF! THE WORLD'S
DEPENDIN' ON US, AN'
YOU'RE GONNA SPREAD
US ACROSS THOSE
PEAKS LIKE PEANUT
BUTTER!

RELEASE
THE
BLASTED
CONTROLS
BEFORE I--

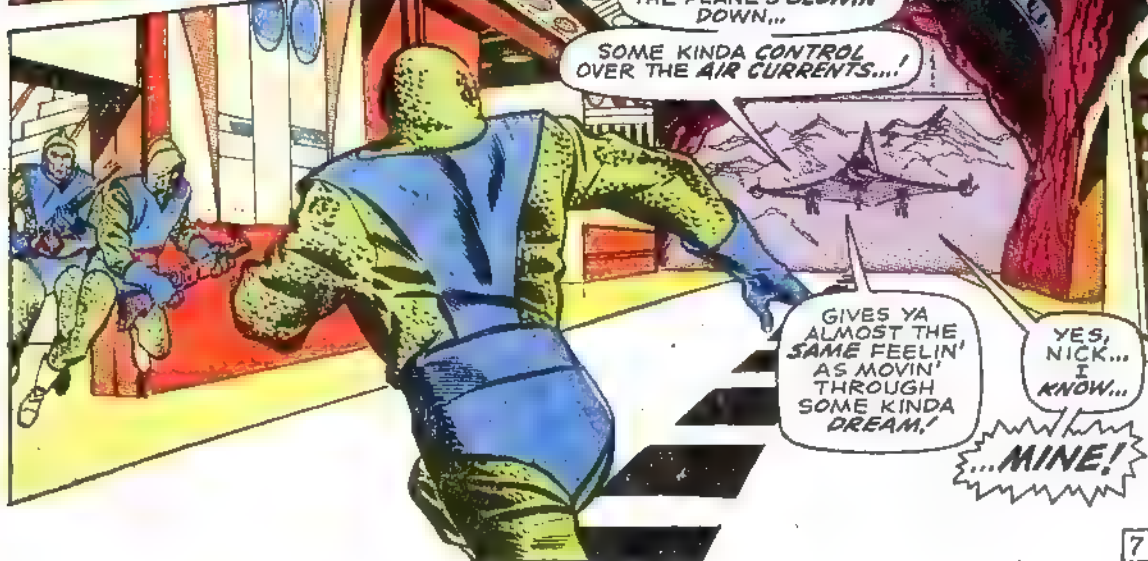


HUH?!

THE SIDE OF
THE MOUNTAIN...
IT'S OPENIN' UP!

HOW COULD YA
FIGURE SOMETHIN'
LIKE THAT?!

I...I DON'T KNOW...
IT SEEMED ALMOST...
INSTINCTIVE!



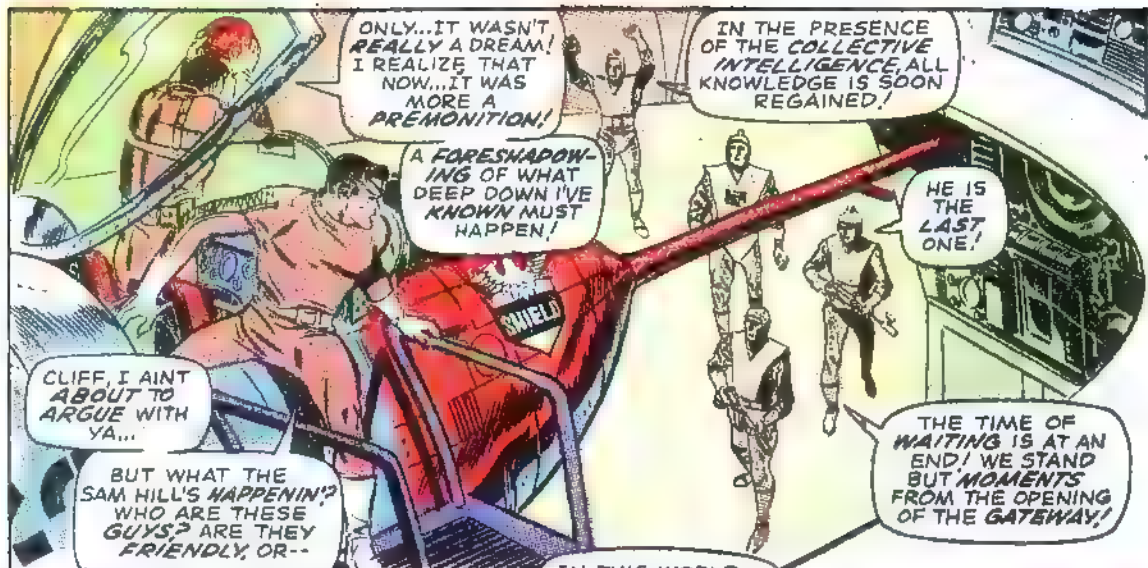
WHAT TH--? NOW
OUR POWER'S GONE!
THE PLANE'S SLOWIN'
DOWN...

SOME KINDA CONTROL
OVER THE AIR CURRENTS...!

GIVES YA
ALMOST THE
SAME FEELIN'
AS MOVIN'
THROUGH
SOME KINDA
DREAM!

YES,
NICK...
I
KNOW...

...MINE!



ONLY...IT WASN'T
REALLY A DREAM!
I REALIZE THAT
NOW...IT WAS
MORE A
PREMONITION!

IN THE PRESENCE
OF THE COLLECTIVE
INTELLIGENCE, ALL
KNOWLEDGE IS SOON
REGAINED!

A FORESHADOW-
ING OF WHAT
DEEP DOWN I'VE
KNOWN MUST
HAPPEN!

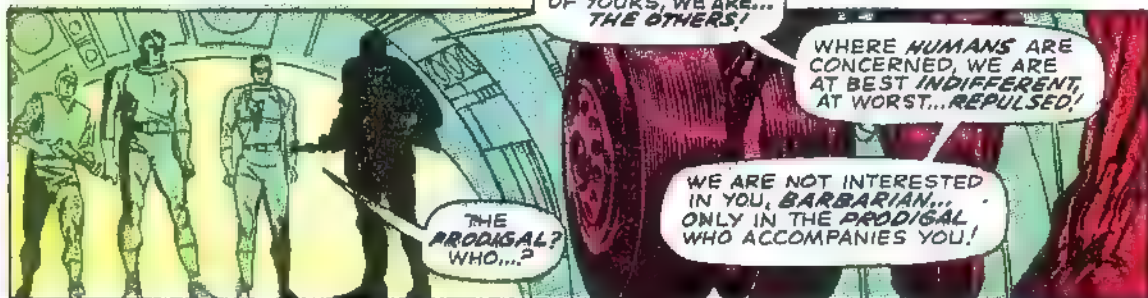
HE IS
THE
LAST
ONE!

CLIFF, I AINT
ABOUT
TO ARGUE WITH
YA...

BUT WHAT THE
SAM HILL'S HAPPENIN'?
WHO ARE THESE
GUYS? ARE THEY
FRIENDLY, OR--

THE TIME OF
WAITING IS AT AN
END! WE STAND
BUT MOMENTS
FROM THE OPENING
OF THE GATEWAY!

IN THIS WORLD
OF YOURS, WE ARE...
THE OTHERS!



WHERE HUMANS ARE
CONCERNED, WE ARE
AT BEST INDIFFERENT,
AT WORST...REPULSED!

WE ARE NOT INTERESTED
IN YOU, BARBARIAN...
ONLY IN THE PRODIGAL
WHO ACCOMPANIES YOU!

THE
PRODIGAL?
WHO...?



HE MEANS ME, NICK...!
IT'S ALL GRADUALLY
COMING BACK... I'M
ONE OF THEM!

ONE OF 'EM? BUT
THEY'RE PROBABLY
THE ONES PULLIN'
DOWN THAT
PLANETOID TO
CLOBBER THE WHOLE
EARTH!

YOU DO,
IF YOU'RE
ONE OF
THE...
OTHERS!

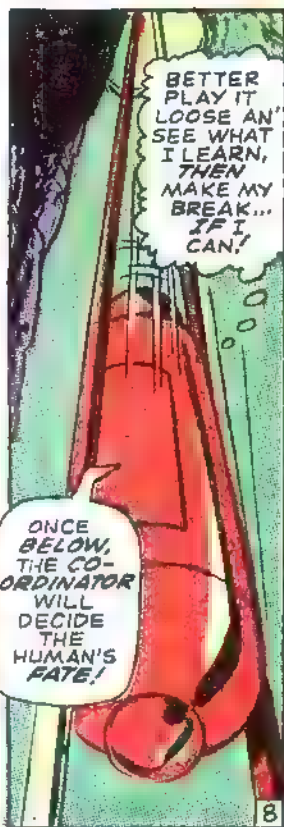
CLIFF, I KNOW YA!
YA BEEN WITH SHIELD
FOR YEARS... AN' A
GOOD MAN! YA DON'T
JUST SHRUG OFF
SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT
AN FORGET IT!



ENOUGH! TALK IS
WEARYING AND
DECADENT! WE MUST
MAKE THE DESCENT!

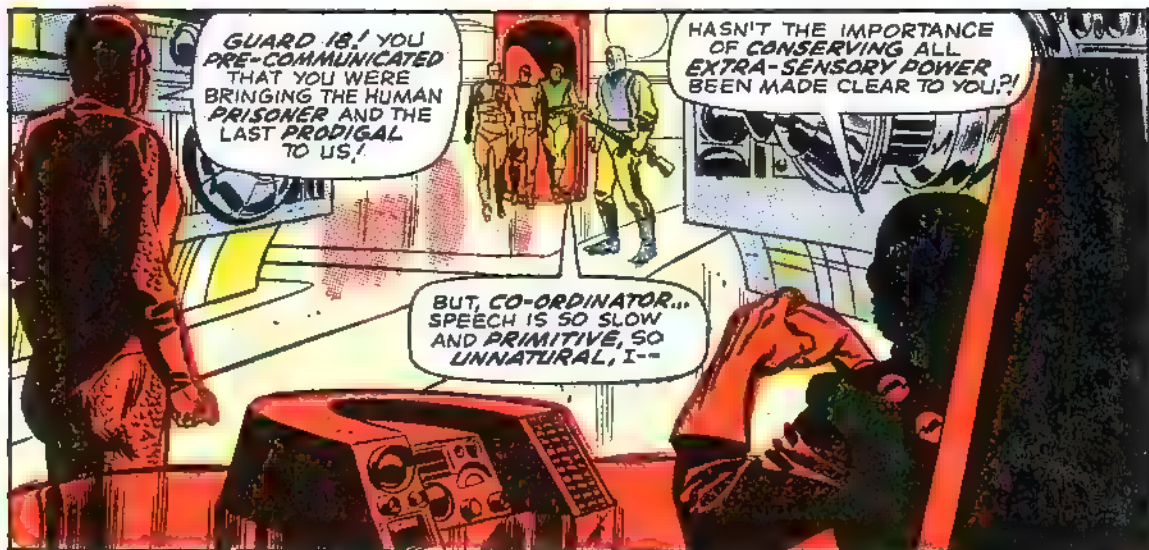
GUESS I'M
A SAP
TALKIN' TO RANDALL
LIKE THAT...

...WHY
SHOULD
ANY OF IT
MEAN
SOMETHIN'
TO HIM...IF
HE AINT
HUMAN?!



BETTER
PLAY IT
LOOSE AN'
SEE WHAT
I LEARN,
THEN
MAKE MY
BREAK...
IF I
CAN!

ONCE
BELOW,
THE CO-
ORDINATOR
WILL
DECIDE
THE
HUMAN'S
FATE!



GUARD 18! YOU
PRE-COMMUNICATED
THAT YOU WERE
BRINGING THE HUMAN
PRISONER AND THE
LAST PRODIGAL
TO US!

HASN'T THE IMPORTANCE
OF CONSERVING ALL
EXTRA-SENSORY POWER
BEEN MADE CLEAR TO YOU?!

BUT, CO-ORDINATOR...
SPEECH IS SO SLOW
AND PRIMITIVE, SO
UNNATURAL, I--



ENOUGH! WOULD YOU
JEOPARDIZE THE OPENING
OF THE GATEWAY BY
CLINGING TO HABIT?

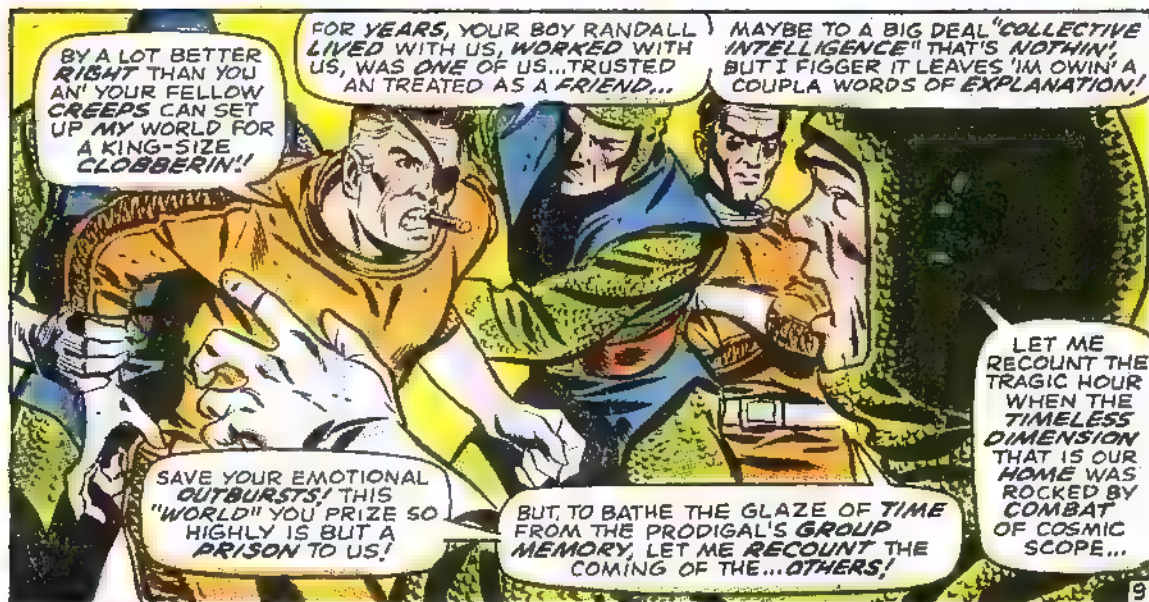
SUCCESS IS BEST
ASSURED BY EACH OF
US BEING ABLE TO
PARTICIPATE TO OUR
FULLEST CAPACITY
AT THE FINAL MOMENT!

WE MUST
SAVE
OURSELVES
UNTIL
THEN!



I FIGGER YOU'RE PART OF THE
OPPOSITION NOW, RANDALL...BUT
YA COULD AT LEAST CUE ME IN ON
WHAT THIS
MUMBO-JUMBO
IS ABOUT!

BE SILENT,
PRODIGAL! BY
WHAT RIGHT
SHOULD A HUMAN
MAKE DEMANDS
ON ONE OF THE
OTHERS?!



BY A LOT BETTER
RIGHT THAN YOU
AN' YOUR FELLOW
CREEPS CAN SET
UP MY WORLD FOR
A KING-SIZE
CLOBBERIN'!

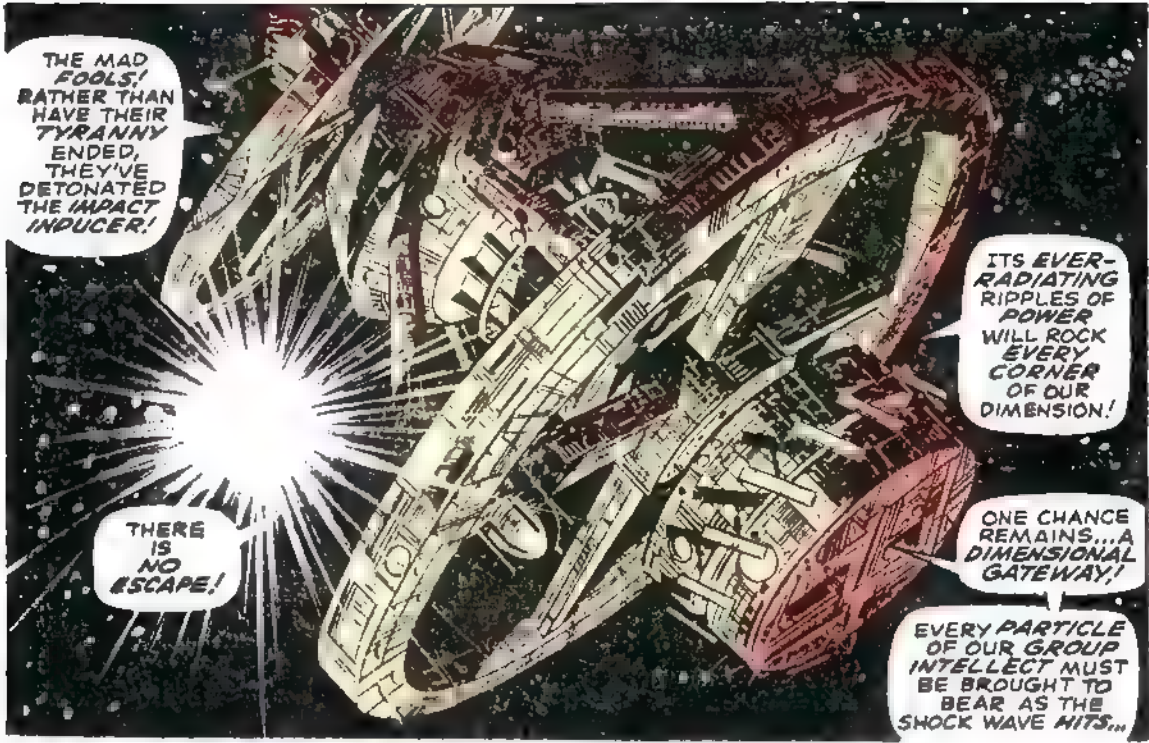
FOR YEARS, YOUR BOY RANDALL
LIVED WITH US, WORKED WITH
US, WAS ONE OF US...TRUSTED
AN TREATED AS A FRIEND...

MAYBE TO A BIG DEAL "COLLECTIVE
INTELLIGENCE" THAT'S NOTHIN',
BUT I FIGGER IT LEAVES 'IM OWIN' A
COUPLA WORDS OF EXPLANATION!

SAVE YOUR EMOTIONAL
OUTBURSTS! THIS
"WORLD" YOU PRIZE SO
HIGHLY IS BUT A
PRISON TO US!

BUT, TO BATHE THE GLAZE OF TIME
FROM THE PRODIGAL'S GROUP
MEMORY, LET ME RECOUNT THE
COMING OF THE...OTHERS!

LET ME
RECOUNT THE
TRAGIC HOUR
WHEN THE
TIMELESS
DIMENSION
THAT IS OUR
HOME WAS
ROCKED BY
COMBAT
OF COSMIC
SCOPE...



THE MAD
FOOLS!
RATHER THAN
HAVE THEIR
TYRANNY
ENDED,
THEY'VE
DETONATED
THE IMPACT
INDUCER!

THERE
IS
NO
ESCAPE!

ITS EVER-
RADIATING
RIPPLES OF
POWER
WILL ROCK
EVERY
CORNER
OF OUR
DIMENSION!

ONE CHANCE
REMAINS...A
DIMENSIONAL
GATEWAY!

EVERY PARTICLE
OF OUR GROUP
INTELLECT MUST
BE BROUGHT TO
BEAR AS THE
SHOCK WAVE HITS...

"AND THE MASSIVE
MENTAL WILL, COM-
BINED WITH THE
BRUTAL IMPACT,
CRASHED THE SHIP OF
SURVIVORS THROUGH
A DIMENSIONAL
BARRIER TO
A WORLD CALLED...
EARTH!"

"THE SHIP WAS BROUGHT
DOWN INTO THE
DESOLATION OF THE
ANDES, AND STEPS
WERE IMMEDIATELY
TAKEN TO BUILD A
PERMANENT HEAD-
QUARTERS WITHIN
THIS MOUNTAIN..."

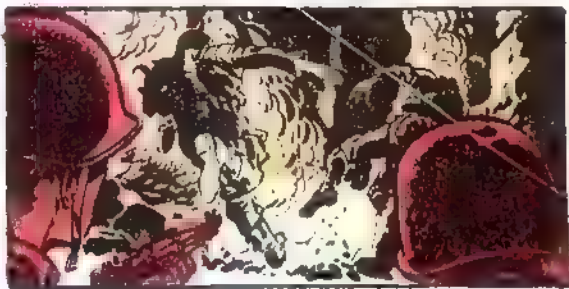
"A COLONY HAD TO BE
ESTABLISHED...IT WOULD
BE ALMOST TWENTY
YEARS EARTH TIME
BEFORE THE IMPACT
INDUCER'S DEADLY
REVERBERATIONS
STILLED IN OUR
HOME DIMENSION..."

"THROUGHOUT THE LONG
EXILE, WE WORKED
UNCEASINGLY TO DEVISE
MEANS OF ARTIFICIALLY
RECREATING THE SAME
EXACT CONDITIONS
THAT BROUGHT US
HERE FOR OUR
EVENTUAL RETURN..."



"NOT THAT EFFORT WASN'T MADE TO ESTABLISH OUTSIDE CONTACT...BUT THE ATTEMPTS ALWAYS ENDED IN UNPROVOKED HOSTILITY!" HENCE, WE CHOSE TO STYLE OURSELVES **THE OTHERS**, AND STAY APART FROM THOSE BARBARIANS WHO EXHIBITED ALL THE LATENT EVIL PRESENT IN THE **TYRANTS** FROM OUR OWN DIMENSION WHO CAUSED OUR EXILE HERE."

"TO KEEP US **POSTED** ON THE BEHAVIOR OF THE SAVAGES AROUND US, **PRODIGALS** WERE SENT INTO THEIR MIDST, GROUP MEMORIES **BLANKED** AND ARTIFICIAL ONES **INDUCED** TO ENABLE THEM TO PASS PERFECTLY WHILE FUNCTIONING AS **RECEIVING SETS** FOR US! TIME AND AGAIN, THE CRUEL, WAR-LIKE NATURE OF HUMANS WAS ONLY **TOO WELL** CONFIRMED..."



"THEN, AT LONG LAST, THE DAY OF ESCAPE WAS AT HAND..."

ALL PRODIGALS ARE BEING RECALLED... THEIR GROUP MEMORIES GRADUALLY RESTORED...

WE MUST HAVE FULL MASS MENTAL FORCE TO ASSURE WE BREAK FREE OF THIS DUNGEON EARTH INTO OUR OWN DIMENSION!

AND TO DO THAT, YOU'RE WILLIN' TO KNOCK OFF OUR WORLD JUST LIKE YOUR OLD ENEMY TRIED DOIN' TO YOURS!

WE STUDIED THE MATTER AMPLY...THE TRAITS WE FOUND IN HUMANS LEAVE LITTLE CAUSE TO REGRET WHAT WE DO!

IF YA ONLY LOOK FOR THE BAD, YA FIND IT...BUT ALL HUMANS AINT LIKE WHAT YOU SAW!

RANDALL! YOU CAN TELL 'IM! YA LIVED AMONG US, SAW BOTH SIDES...TELL 'IM HOW IT REALLY IS!

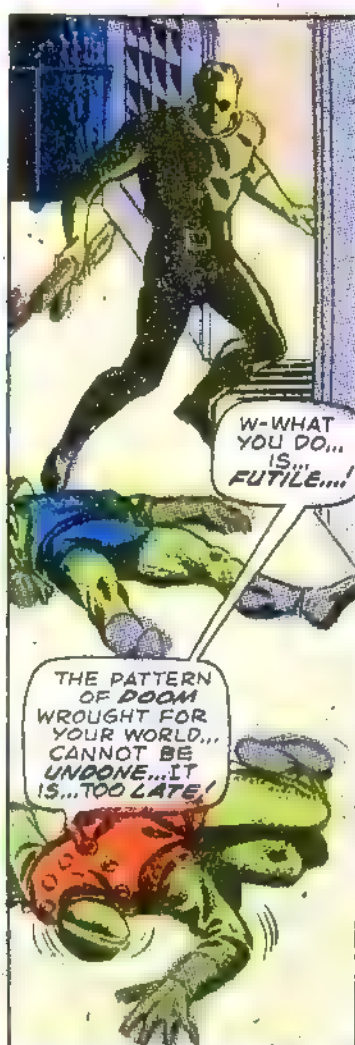
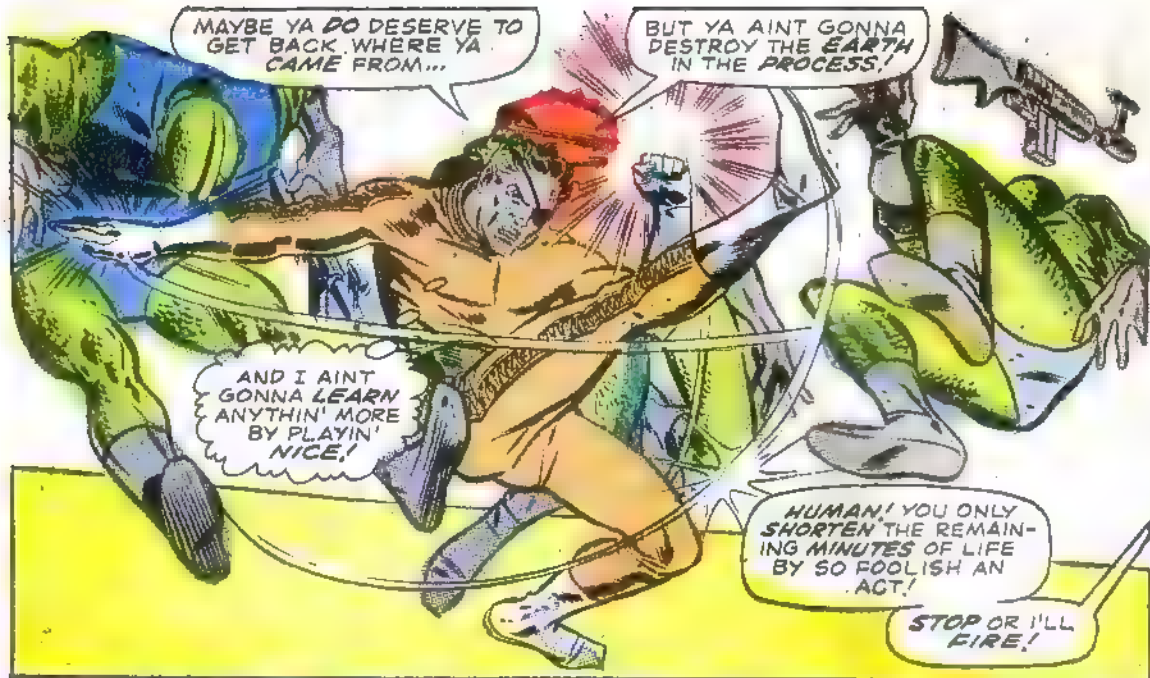
THERE IS NO NEED! THE PATTERN IS CLEAR TO US, IF NOT TO YOU!

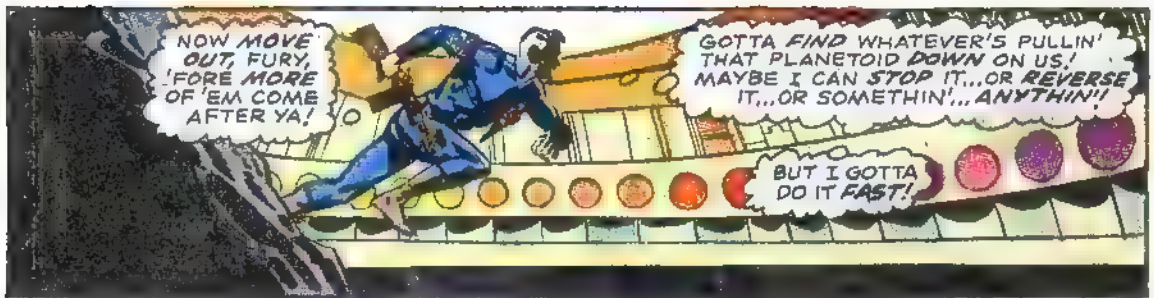
THE PRODIGAL YOU KNEW AS CLIFF RANDALL MUST JOIN THE REST OF THE OTHERS IN THE LOADING CHAMBER!

THERE CAN BE NO TURNING BACK NOW! THE FINAL MOMENT IS ALMOST UPON US!

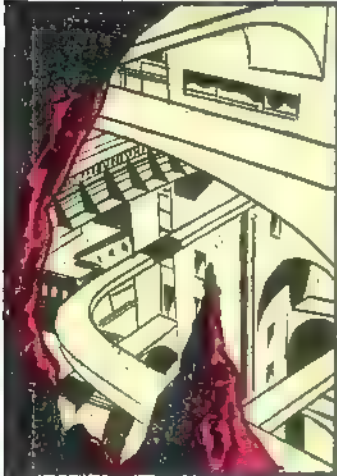
AND JUST WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE ME, BRIGHT EYES?

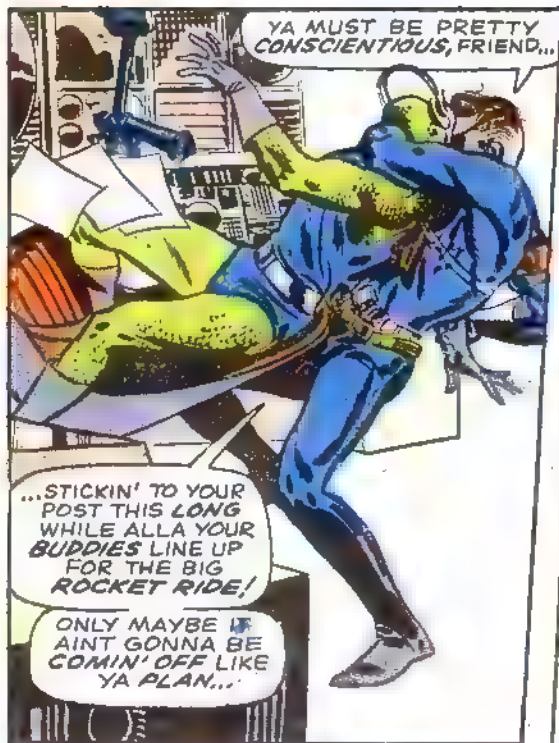
YOU, HUMAN...?





FRANTICALLY, DESPERATELY, THE INDOMITABLE DIRECTOR OF SHIELD HURLS HIMSELF THROUGH THE MYRIAD MAZE OF CORRIDORS AND COMPARTMENTS COMPRISING THE OTHERS' COLONY...





YA MUST BE PRETTY CONSCIENTIOUS, FRIEND...

...STICKIN' TO YOUR POST THIS LONG WHILE ALLA YOUR BUDDIES LINE UP FOR THE BIG ROCKET RIDE!

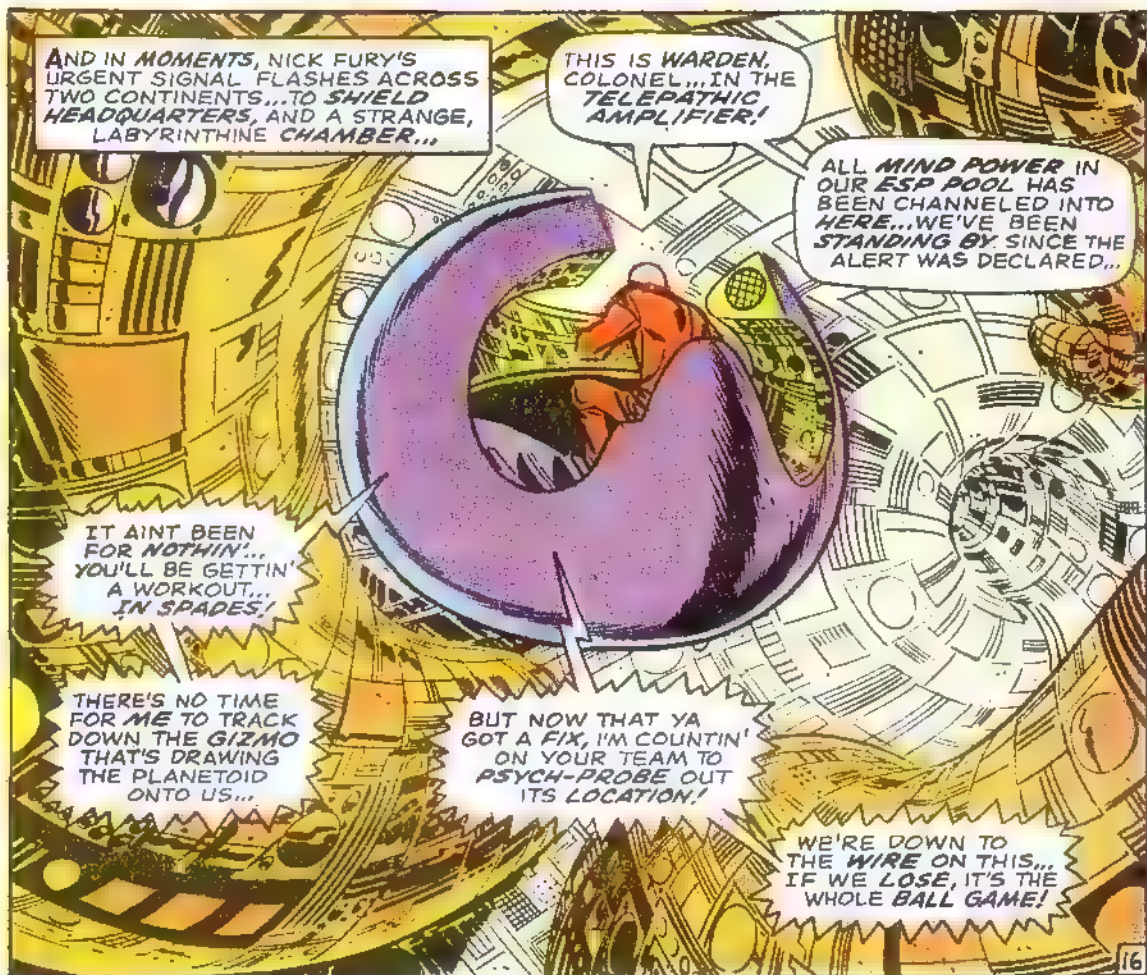
ONLY MAYBE I AINT GONNA BE COMIN' OFF LIKE YA PLAN...



...NOT IF YOUR BROADCAST EQUIPMENT IS AS POWERFUL AS IT LOOKS!



...NOT IF I CAN GET THROUGH TO SHIELD'S ESP DIVISION!



AND IN MOMENTS, NICK FURY'S URGENT SIGNAL FLASHES ACROSS TWO CONTINENTS...TO SHIELD HEADQUARTERS, AND A STRANGE, LABYRINTHINE CHAMBER...

THIS IS WARDEN, COLONEL... IN THE TELEPATHIC AMPLIFIER!

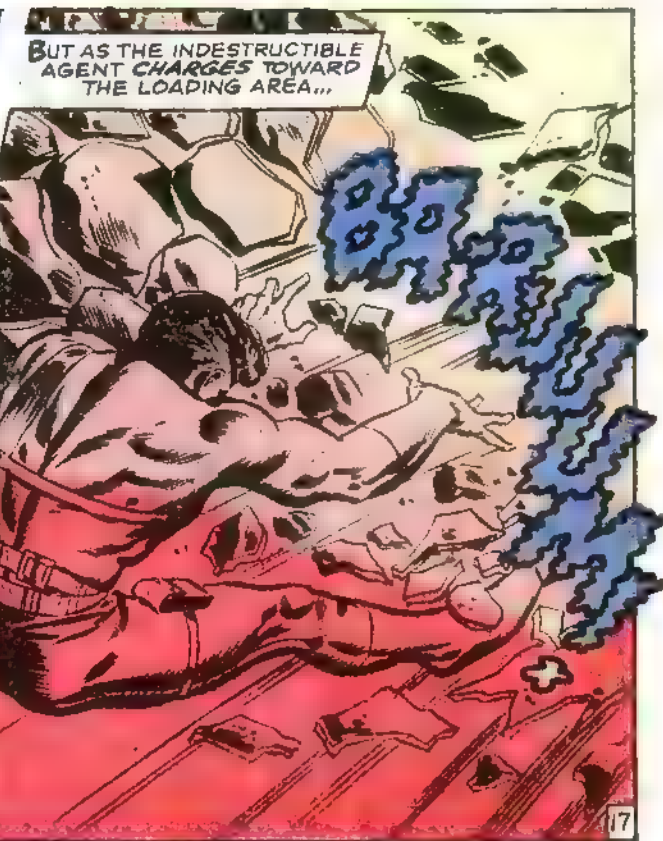
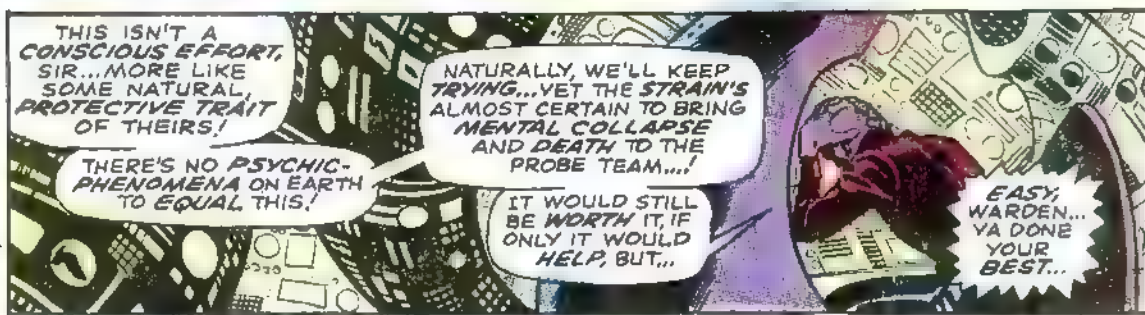
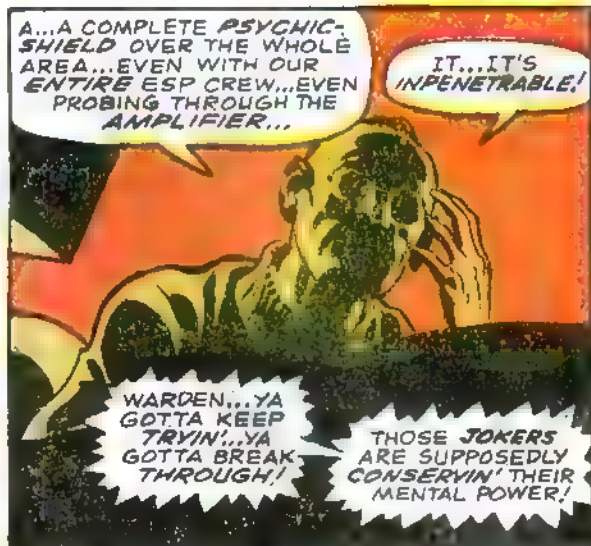
ALL MIND POWER IN OUR ESP POOL HAS BEEN CHANNELLED INTO HERE...WE'VE BEEN STANDING BY SINCE THE ALERT WAS DECLARED...

IT AINT BEEN FOR NOTHIN'... YOU'LL BE GETTIN' A WORKOUT... IN SPADES!

THERE'S NO TIME FOR ME TO TRACK DOWN THE GIZMO THAT'S DRAWING THE PLANETOID ONTO US...

BUT NOW THAT YA GOT A FIX, I'M COUNTIN' ON YOUR TEAM TO PSYCH-PROBE OUT ITS LOCATION!

WE'RE DOWN TO THE WIRE ON THIS... IF WE LOSE, IT'S THE WHOLE BALL GAME!

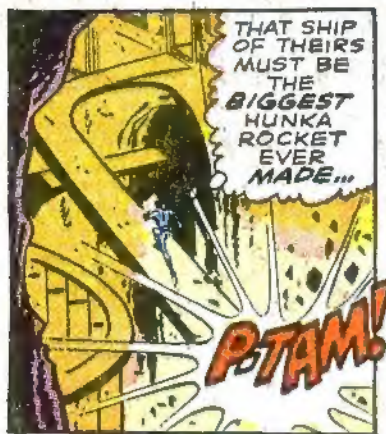




THEY'RE BLOWIN' UP THE JOINT... DESTROYIN' THE WHOLE COLONY!

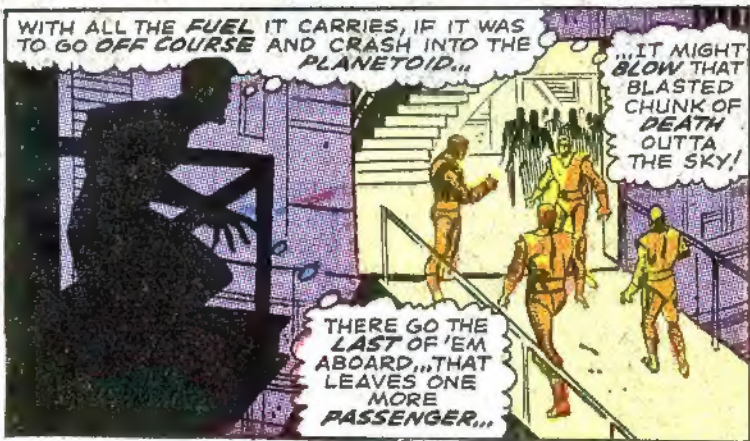
THAT MEANS THEY'LL BE BLASTIN' OFF ANY SECOND!

ON YOUR FEET, FURY! YA GOTTA REACH 'EM BEFORE THEN!



THAT SHIP OF THEIRS MUST BE THE BIGGEST HUNKA ROCKET EVER MADE...

P-TAM!



WITH ALL THE FUEL IT CARRIES, IF IT WAS TO GO OFF COURSE AND CRASH INTO THE PLANETOID...

...IT MIGHT BLOW THAT BLASTED CHUNK OF DEATH OUTTA THE SKY!

THERE GO THE LAST OF 'EM ABOARD... THAT LEAVES ONE MORE PASSENGER...



...ME!

THIS FORWARD HATCH MUST BE THE PILOT'S COMPARTMENT! IF I CAN MAKE IT INTO THERE...

I'LL STAND SOME CHANCE OF SWINGIN' THIS BABY TO HIT THE PLANETOID WHEN SHE TAKES OFF!

AND, WITH A HERCULEAN LEAP...



AWRIGHT! YOU BOYS ARE RELIEVED! GET AWAY FROM THOSE CONTROLS AND--

WHAT TH--RANDALL! THEY GOT YOU PILOTIN' THIS THING?!

NICK! ARE YOU CRAZY? WHAT CAN YOU HOPE TO DO NOW? WHY WASTE THE LITTLE BIT OF LIFE LEFT YOU?!



'CAUSE THE LIFE OF EARTH IS MORE IMPORTANT! YA MUSTA SPENT ENOUGH TIME AMONG US TO KNOW THAT!

BUT I KEEP FORGETTIN' NONE OF THAT MEANT ANYTHIN' TO YA!

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, I--

FURY!

GOOD WORK, PRODIGAL! YOU MADE HIM HESITATE LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE ME A CLEAR SHOT!

IT'S MERELY A SHOCK BLAST, BUT HE'LL FALL TO HIS DOOM!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE



WHY STARE AFTER HIM, PRODIGAL? HE WAS ONLY A HUMAN!

TRUE...YET FOR MUCH OF MY LIFE, SO WAS I! COULD THAT BE WHY HE HESITATED--WHY I FEEL--

CEASE MUSING OVER SAVAGES! WE MUST NOW DEPART!

ONLY THING 'TWEEN ME AN' BEIN' WASTED ARE THOSE GANTRY CABLES BELOW...

THE CABLES! THEY'RE RELEASIN' THEM FOR BLAST OFF!

GOTTA HANG ON... SWING WITH 'EM... PRAY I CAN MAKE IT TO THE...

CLIK!

...BUT LOOKS LIKE THEY'LL DO...IF MY ARMS STAY IN THEIR SOCKETS FROM THE JOLT!

CLIK!



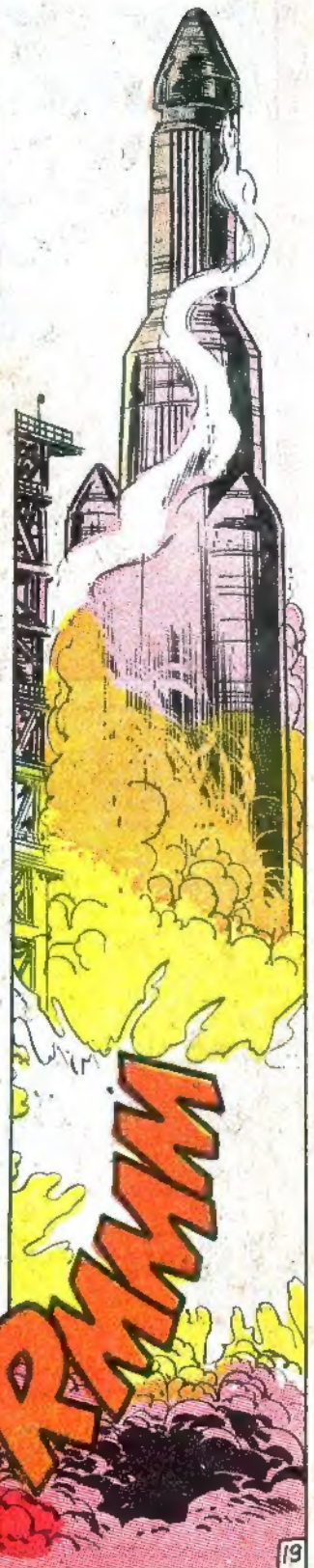
LEDGE! UNGHNNNN!

WHAM!



MADE IT!...BUT WHAT USE IS IT SAVIN' MY OWN CRUMMY SKIN?

WITH THAT ROCKET GOES THE WORLD'S LAST HOPE!



MMMM



WITH THE MOCKING ROAR OF THE SPACE-BOUND ROCKET RINGING IN HIS EARS, FURY RACES TO HIS PLANE...



THERE GOES THEIR COLONY!

LIKE A SNEAK PREVIEW OF WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THE REST'A EARTH!



NUMBLY, THE SHIELD DIRECTOR MAKES THE AGONIZING RETURN FLIGHT...



HOW D'YA DO IT? HOW DO YA LOOK THE WORLD IN THE EYE AND TELL 'EM IT'S ALL OVER?!

BUT, AS THE DEJECTED RAMROD REPORTS...

COLONEL/ ON THE OBSERVATRON'S MAGNI-VIEW SCREEN... LOOK!

THAT THIN TRAIL OF LIGHT SWERVING TOWARD THE PLANETOID... WHAT...?



THE ROCKET! THE OTHERS' ROCKET...

AND SUDDENLY, THE HUGE SCREEN FLARES WITH A SEARING SPECTACLE OF COSMIC VIOLENCE UNLEASHED--!



LORD! THE PLANETOID... THEY... THEY HIT IT!

B-BUT...THEY WERE SAFELY ON THEIR WAY...NOTHING TO STOP THEM...WHY SHOULD THEIR SHIP ABRUPTLY ALTER ITS COURSE...?

POSSIBLY THERE WAS SOME MANNER OF MALFUNCTION...

...OR SERIOUS MISCALCULATION!

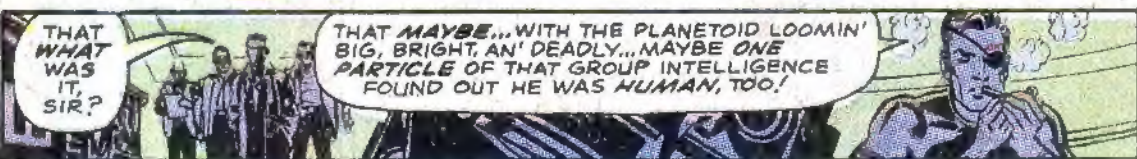
YOU SAW THEM, COLONEL... SPOKE WITH THEM...ANY THEORIES?



YEAH...MAYBE... AT LEAST...I'D LIKE TO THINK THAT WAS IT...

THAT WHAT WAS IT, SIR?

THAT MAYBE...WITH THE PLANETOID LOOMIN' BIG, BRIGHT, AN' DEADLY...MAYBE ONE PARTICLE OF THAT GROUP INTELLIGENCE FOUND OUT HE WAS HUMAN, TOO!



AS NICK FURY WALKS QUIETLY FROM THE CHAMBER, THE MAMMOTH VIEW-SCREEN BEHIND HIM FILLS WITH FIERY BRILLIANCE FROM THE FANTASTIC PAROXYSM'S AFTERGLOW...THEN FADES SLOWLY TO BLACK--

...IT LEAVES YOU HERE ON THIS DOOMED PLANET WITH THE REST OF YOUR FELLOW MEN, WHILE WE, IN MERE MINUTES BY YOUR RECKONING, SHALL SOAR SPACEWARD IN...

...THIS!

WE WILL BE CARRIED TO A POINT PRECISELY THE DISTANCE FROM EARTH THAT OUR ORIGINAL SHIP WAS FROM THE CENTER OF THE IMPACT INDUCER'S DETONATION...

THE PLANETOID, BEING HURTLING TOWARD EARTH BY OTHERLY-DIMENSIONAL POWER NO HUMAN COULD BEGIN TO COMPREHEND OR STOP, WILL COLLIDE WITH SUCH FORCE THAT THE CATAclySM WHICH FOLLOWS WILL RECREATE THE ONE WHICH ORIGINALLY STRUCK US!

THAT, IN PERFECT CONJUNCTION WITH THE SEARING CONCENTRATION OF OUR COLLECTIVE MIND, WILL RIP OPEN ANOTHER GATEWAY BETWEEN OUR DIMENSIONS...

...AND AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF WAITING, LONGING, LOATHING THIS BRUTAL AND PRIMITIVE PRISON PLANET...WE SHALL BE THE "OTHERS" NO MORE!

WE SHALL BE...
HOME!

